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20: Hart E-5 (1951) 1954 OA1 Philippines
Central Bisayan OA14

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There was hardly a branch of the local government to which the influence of the priest did not extend, directly or indirectly. He was the inspector of primary schools, the town censor, honorary president of all local government committees, a member of the town council, assisted in choosing the local officers (technically without a vote), signed all certificates of election, participated in decisions to build public works, and even had the authority to decide at what hour the town council would assemble.[107] The priests of Siaton parish were not atypical.

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Cadiane writes of the schooling he received in Siaton *poblacion* during the latter part of the 19th century.

> Here was the real study. There were many students. You were given three days to learn a lesson. If you did not learn your lesson you were told to lie on your stomach on a bench and you were whipped three times. If you were absent from class the number of days you were absent was doubled and you were whipped this many times.

A great deal of time appears to have been spent in studying Spanish.

> If you did not speak Spanish in the class and outside in the yard we were in danger of being punished if someone reported us. If we were discovered or reported not speaking Spanish we were whipped six times, [i.e., given six lashes]. We had a Spanish

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[107] *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President*. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, I, 1900, pp. 57-8. This report is often called the "Schurman Report" after the head of the Commission, Jacob Gould Schurman. Hereafter cited as *Philippine Commission Report, I, 1900*.

The sugar-producing areas of Negros were expanding. In 1836 less than 300 tons of sugar had been produced while thirty years later the production had increased to nearly 12,000 tons. The declaration of Iloilo city as a free port in 1855 stimulated the infant sugar industry. "The total value of exports leaving the port of Iloilo... jumped from ₱82,000 [$41,000] in 1858 to over ₱1,000,000 [$500,000] in 1863, with most of this increase in exports coming from the shipment of sugar from Negros."[111] In the same periods (the 1860's) the sugar haciendas of Negros began to develop; some of them covered several thousand acres and supported their owners in luxury.

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The Justices of the Peace in Siaton

The year following the division of Negros into two provinces (1891), the first justice of the peace was appointed in Siaton. In 1885 a royal decree, a "concession to public opinion," had provided for the appointment of a justice of the peace to every municipality. This office previously had been filled by the capitans. "When such persons [lawyers or others 'whose position and circumstances warrant it'] could not be found the petty governors

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[111] Wernstedt, op. cit., p. 79. Walker states that in the early 1900's Iloilo owed its existence largely to Negros' sugar industry. Walker, op. cit., p. 10.

[capitana] of the municipalities were to act as justices of peace."[112] The first justice appointed in Siaton was Felipe Tayko who had no law degree but "whose position and circumstances warranted it." 175* 624

Often the first justices resigned and, according to Cadiane, "sometimes there was no justice of peace in Siaton and the capitan acted as the justice." Cadiane himself was justice of the peace in Siaton from 1906-1914.

Until the appointment of the justices, land disputes in Siaton had been settled either by the capitan or the teniente mayor (chief lieutenant,, a position similar to the present vice-mayor of a municipality). During the Spanish period there were few court cases over land claims "because wide areas were still uncultivated, although there were disputes over boundaries which were settled very easily." There were normal disturbances of peace and order due to theft, fights caused by gambling debts or drunkenness, etc. Persons caught stealing were given 150 lashes at the church entrance after the Sunday mass. The offenders were jailed until their wounds had healed. "Mostly, those who were caught and punished left 175* 685 624 622 [689] 175* 681

[112] Cayetano S. Arellano and Florentino Torres, "The Judiciary," Census of the Philippine Islands: 1903. Washington, D.C., United States Bureau of Census, 1905, IV, p. 403. Some sources state the justices of the peace were authorized in 1885. The confusion is because the reform, a royal order of May 29, 1885, was not confirmed until January 24, 1887. There was a lag of six years between the confirmation of this decree and the appointment of the first justice of the peace in Siaton.